

# God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

**Objective:** The students will be able to state that God is called the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that the Trinity was revealed when Jesus was baptized.

## **For the Catechist**

The students have been taught that God is Trinity in every book of the series thus far. They are also familiar with the Theophany story. There is a feast day lesson reserved in this text for Theophany as well. In this lesson they are asked to think about the Trinity as a community of love. The Trinity is the example of how we should love one another.

The children have learned to make the sign of the cross with their fingers held to honor the Trinity and Jesus' two natures. In this lesson they are asked to learn the meaning of this posture.

In keeping with the title of the book, the Trinity is described as being the source of our life. They have learned in lesson 1 that God the Father is the Creator of life. In lesson 12 they will learn that Jesus is the Bread of life. In lesson 9, they will learn that the Holy Spirit is the Giver of life. The Trinity, God, gives life. In the next lesson your class will enthrone the Bible in the icon corner as the closing of the lesson. Make sure you have a Bible, and read ahead about the ceremony.

## **Background Reading**

*(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)*

### **The Holy Trinity**

"The dogma of the Trinity is the fundamental Christian experience. Unable to make an image of God, iconography frequently represents the Holy Trinity in the form of the Three Angels who visited Abraham by the Oak of Mamre. 'The Lord appeared to Abraham by the terebinth of Mamre, as he sat in the entrance of his tent, while the day was growing hot. Looking up, he saw three men standing nearby' (Gen. 18:1-2). To show that they belong to the heavenly world, they are depicted as winged Angels" (*Come Bless the Lord* 29).

## **Lesson Plan Overview**

**Opening:** Trisagion ( Beginning) Prayers [For this lesson, and all others, refer to the "Liturgical Prayers According to Jurisdictions" in the section "Introduction to Grade 2" for the correct wording to use in your parish.]

**Introduction:** Analogy of marriage to Trinity **Need:** A wedding photo of a bride and groom.

**Read Text Aloud:** Have students read text aloud. You may wish to read the Bible passage.

### **Activity Tracks:**

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic:* About the Trinity
- *Group:* "Up to Bat" Review Game
- *Craft:* Community of Love

**Closing:** Trisagion (Beginning) Prayers

## **Come Bless the Lord Icon Packets:**

Packet I: The Holy Trinity, Theophany of Our Lord

Packet II:

## **Teaching Pic:**

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## **The Mystery of God**

"From the beauty and order of nature, thinkers have argued to the existence of a creating principle. But faith requires a leap beyond this to knowledge of a loving and holy Creator. In truth, this can be done only by the favor and power of this Supreme Being. As material creatures, our direct experience of God is limited. As the Gospel says, 'No one has ever seen God...' (John 1:18). God, however, has revealed Himself in many and varied ways. The Old Testament, as well as other religious traditions, describe many experiences of God. God speaks to the hearts of those who have faith and calls them to knowledge of Himself and of His loving plan for humanity. The testimony of various religions agrees on several attributes of God, our name for the Supreme Being. He is holy, meaning that He is completely other than us. He is infinite and transcendent. He is also good and loving to such a degree that we often call what is good 'god-like'"

*(LII 9).*

# The Lesson Plan

## Opening

[Gather the children at the icon corner.] *Welcome to all of you. I am so happy to have each of you in class this year. [Take a few minutes to learn children's names and to make sure the children know each other.] This is a very special year. We will learn about our baptism and chrismation, and about other Mysteries we experience as God's people. Last year you prayed the Trisagion prayers to open and close some of your lessons. Let's see if you can say them with me. [For this lesson and all others refer to the "Liturgical Prayers According to Jurisdictions" in the section "Introduction to Grade 2" for the correct wording to use in your parish.]*

## Introduction

*When we said our prayer just now, we made the sign of the cross. When we make the sign of the cross, we are telling everyone what Christians believe about God. Do you know what we are telling people? [Allow responses.] We are telling people that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is three persons in one. God is three persons or Trinity. Who can explain that? [Allow responses.]*

*Is there anything we know from our experience where two or three can be at the same time one? [Allow responses.] I brought in something to help us begin to understand. [Pull out photo of bride and groom.] How many of you have been to a wedding? At a wedding or marriage, we say that the two, the bride and groom, become one. Have you heard that before? Let's see what that might mean. How can two become one? What do a husband and wife share? How about money? What are other things? (Love, home, children) Now, are the husband and wife two different people? When they become one in marriage are they changed into the same person? (No) Sometimes in marriage the husband and wife become more different than when they were married so that they don't agree on many important things. What might happen then? (Sometimes there is a divorce.)*

*What does this have to do with God? We have come to learn that God is three persons; three persons who are different and yet one. Three persons who share love. In fact, we know that God Is Love. That was the title of your book last year. Unlike a husband and wife who might not always agree, the three persons of the Trinity always agree. And they always help one another. The love that they share is an example for all of us in the Church. We are to always love and help each other. Let's find out more about the Trinity.*

1

## God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the Trinity. We first learned of the Trinity when Jesus was baptized. Here are the words from the Bible:

"After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased'" (Luke 3:21-22).



2

## Reading of Text

*As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).*

*Let's turn to our Unit Introduction page. [Have one student read the lesson titles, and another the questions at the bottom]. Every time we begin a new unit, we will look at this page to find the questions that will be answered. Do you think you know any of these?*

### ... are the Trinity

*Who are the three persons of the Trinity? (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) Show me the way you hold your hand when you make the sign of the cross. [Demonstrate.] We place our three fingers together to remember and honor God as Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Does anyone know what the two fingers held to our palm mean? [Allow responses.] They remember and honor the two natures of Jesus: God and man. Jesus is truly God and truly man. When we make the sign of the cross over our body, we honor the Trinity. Listen to the words . . . [Have children make the sign of the cross with you, attentive to the words.]*

### with you I am well pleased."

*Let's look at the top of the icon. [Have students point to Jesus and the dove (Holy Spirit).] Do you see the half-circle? That represents the heavens opened. What words were heard? ("You are my beloved son, with you I am well pleased.") Wouldn't it be wonderful to hear God say that about each of us one day? We try to live so that God is pleased with us.*

[Read the Bible story slowly, pausing to discuss:]

### ... that we might have life through Him.

*When St. John says Jesus came so we might have life, he is talking about life united to God now and forever.*

### "... whoever loves God must also love his brother."

*Let's say this last phrase together, "whoever . . ." Here is something important. We are to love our brothers . . . only our brothers? No. By "brothers" it means all God's people. We are to love everyone.*

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit love one another. St. John told us that "God is love."

In these words is an important lesson for us. Because the persons of the Trinity love each other, they teach us that we should do the same.



Here are the words St. John wrote about God and love:

**B**eloved, let us love one another, because love is of God . . .

Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him (1 John 4:7-9).

If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. This is the commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother (1 John 4:20-21).

3

**In the Trinity's own way, each person gives us life.**

Each person of the Trinity has given us life in a special way. We have learned to call God "Father." We also say that God is the Creator of Life. We call the Son "Jesus." Jesus came to live with us. We also call Jesus the Bread of Life. The Holy Spirit is often called the helper. He helps us to remember what Jesus taught. He helps us live united to God. We also call the Holy Spirit the Giver of Life. We'll learn how each person of the Trinity gives us life as we study this year.

**He taught us to say "Yes" to God.**

What was the work of Jesus? (To bring people back to God, to heal people, to reunite God and man.) Jesus knew what God wanted Him to do, and He said "Yes" What should we say when we know we must do what God wants? (Yes)

**Let's review:** Who can name the three persons of the Trinity? (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) When were they revealed? (At the baptism of Jesus.) What did St. John tell us about God? God is \_\_\_\_? (Love) And whoever loves God must also love \_\_\_\_\_? (His brother)

**Activity Tracks**

**Basic: "About the Trinity"**

Today in our reading from the Bible, we learned about God, the Trinity. For our activity, let's read each sentence that has a blank word. Below each blank we have three choices for the missing word. Can we decide which one is correct? [Complete the page with the students, or if they can work alone, have them do so and check the answers. They may color the icon. While checking their answers, stress the statement again:] God IS LOVE. Whoever loves God MUST also love his brother and sister.

Each person of the Trinity is important. Each loves us in a special way. In each person's own way, the Trinity gives us life.

Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River. After Jesus was baptized, God had work for Him to do. Jesus said "Yes" to His Father.



Jesus' work was to bring people back to God. He healed people. He reunited God and man. He taught us to say "Yes" to God.

4

**About the Trinity**

Choose a word from below the blank to complete the sentence. Think about what you learned today.

1. God is love.  
smack/hates/love

2. If anyone says "I love God" but hates  
smack/hates/love  
 his brother, he is a liar.  
smack/hates/love

3. Whoever loves God must also love his brother.  
Jim/Bob/God      son/brother/father



**Group:** "Up To Bat" Review Game

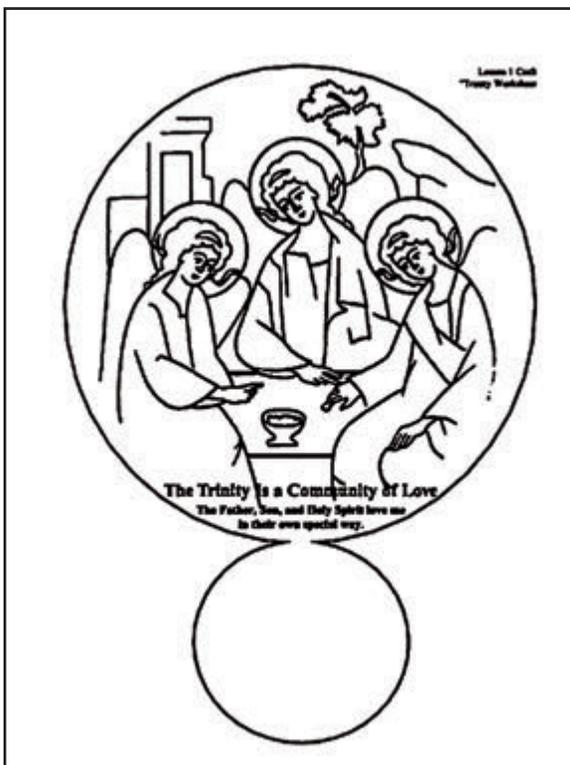
*Materials:* paper and marker or chalkboard on which is drawn a baseball diamond and a scoreboard which includes "outs," and room for each teams score.

*We learned many things about God today. Let's play a game to review what we learned. The game is like baseball. We'll divide into two teams. Then a person from the first team will be like a pitcher. He or she will ask the questions I've printed on these cards. If the person "at bat" from the second team answers correctly they move to a base. Then a new pitcher will ask the next question to a new player. If the player doesn't answer correctly, an "out" will be taken. At three "outs" the other team comes up to bat. [Questions and answers are ready to cut out on provided worksheet.]*

**Craft:** Community of Love

*Materials:* Trinity worksheet, glue stick, markers, yarn

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we learned that the Trinity is a community of love. The three persons of the Trinity love one another, and each loves us in a special way. For our project today, we'll try to show that we understand what we've learned. We'll color the icon of the Trinity and then color a picture of ourselves below the icon. We'll paste yarn, onto the circles so that they yarn goes around the Trinity icon and our picture without being cut. The Trinity is like a circle of love. Each person of the Trinity loves us too.*



**Closing:** *Let's come to the icon corner to pray. We learned today that God is love and that God loves us. We are to love one another. I love each of you. Each of you is precious to God and to me. We learned that God is Trinity. When we say the "Holy God" prayer, we honor the Trinity. Let's pray the Trisagion or Beginning Prayers.*

<p>1. Who are the three persons of the Trinity?          (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)</p>	<p>10. Who baptized Jesus? (John)</p>
<p>2. What do the two fingers held against our palm represent? (Two natures of Jesus Christ; OR Jesus is truly God and truly man.)</p>	<p>11. After Jesus was baptized, God had for Him to do. (Work)</p>
<p>3. When did we first learn about the Trinity? (When Jesus was baptized.)</p>	<p>12. Jesus said ___ to His Father. (Yes)</p>
<p>4. At the baptism of Jesus, in what form did the Holy Spirit appear? (A dove)</p>	<p>13. Jesus' work was to bring people _____          (Back to God)</p>
<p>5. Finish this sentence according to the words of St. John. "God is ____." (Love)</p>	<p>14. He _____ God and man. (Reunited)</p>
<p>6. The voice of the Father said, "You are my _____ Son." (Beloved)</p>	<p>15. Jesus taught us to say ____ to God. (Yes)</p>
<p>7. The voice of the Father said, "... with you I am well ____ ." (Pleased)</p>	
<p>8. The Trinity _____ each other. (Love)</p>	
<p>9. What is the name of the river in which Jesus was baptized? (Jordan)</p>	

